

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

March 5, 2003

7:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Smith.

A moment of silent prayer is observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Alderman Wihby, Gatsas, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Lopez, O’Neil and Smith.

Absent: Aldermen Thibault, Guinta and Forest.

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, Ward 7, Manchester stated:

I would like to give a two thumbs up to Alderman Garrity for the article that was in the paper, or he wants to have a reconsideration on the West Side Senior Center. I hope this Board goes along and reconsiders that project completely. It’s not the right place. It is too crowded and you’re going to have to do something again in a short period of time. Look at your options that are out there. The other thing considers the ballpark. I watched the presentation of the feasibility study and I have to admit I was screaming at the TV.

Alderman Gatsas, you were a bird dog that was on the trail and then somehow you lost the scent. You were there. You were asking questions about how many studies this company has done and how ball teams are involved, about a dozen or dozen and a half, how many actually built places, about half that. And then I’m waiting for the next question: How many cities have you advised that a ball team is not in your future? And then I was waiting for the next question: Of the teams cites that have put a team in place, how are they doing now? Why is New Haven folding? And then I listened to Alderman Pinard ask a question: Did

you go out and interview any individual people, the people that are going to by the 4,000 to 5,000 seats down there, to go in, and the answer was No. And nobody ran with it. Nobody ran with it at all. It was a half-done study, and you guys bought it. I think Alderman Gatsas' question about surplus City property and how it's disposed of, needs to be looked at a whole lot better. But one important thing, and this goes back Alderman Garrity to the Senior Center on the West side. One thing this Board has done, and a lot of Boards have done, is it ought to be a standard practice of this Board, if it's not written into the Charter it should be a process of this Board, that any presentation concerning money that comes before this Board, no action will be taken, no vote will be taken for a minimum of one week. Until the next regular meeting. You guys get presentations put to you, you don't have a chance to look at them and ask the questions and you vote on them that night. And then you come back later saying maybe we should have done something different. I think you should do that. Snow plowing...talked about that a couple of times. Lake Avenue onto Hanover Street. Since Christmas it's been half a lane. Since the big snowstorm a week and a half ago we are down to one lane now. OK. Stark Street, Franklin Street right out here, absolutely the pits. Does anybody ride around this City; any of you guys ride around the City and call the Highway Department? Do the Foremen from the Highway Department go out and look around? OK. All your major routes that come into the City, those things should be cleaned so that you can egress the City in and out with no problem. Take a look at that. And the big thing is we don't have a place to dump snow. OK. You're renting land at the airport to the Autofair. We used to dump snow there. But we could put a truckload in your parking spot, your Honor, out here and then you could park at an angle.

Joe Levasseur, 866 Elm Street, Manchester stated:

I have come here tonight to thank Alderman Garrity for having the courage to stop and reconsider his vote on the West Side Senior Center. After hearing about the changes and realizing the cost to put a senior center in an area that is so congested, as to be dangerous to our seniors, I think Alderman Garrity has done the right thing. I understand Mayor Baines is very upset because he is not getting his way. But on many occasions it has been Mayor Baines himself who has stated that elected officials have the right to change their minds. As he has done many, many times himself. The taxpayers of this City, and myself included, are bowled over by a \$4 Million price tag, when all the things are considered for cost and the amount of money that the seniors have to go and raise themselves will not be of first quality. When I was an alderman the cost was expected not to exceed \$2.5 Million, and that was for a new site in a new location. Now, Mayor Baines thinks it's OK to rip down and pay \$750,000 for three apartment buildings when there is hardly any place for people to live already. Mayor Baines states that the City can sell the nine acre site on the west side for a million, but is still willing to pay \$750,000 for three apartment buildings in a less than desirable location. Only Mayor Baines could argue for the West Side in the fuzzy math that goes along with that location. The location and the price of the site does bother me, but what Mayor Baines pulled on the Aldermen two weeks ago, by signing contracts after he was asked not to, is downright fraud. Alderman Garrity sent the aldermen his motion to

reconsider the site location, but Mayor Baines even after the Alderman Garrity's letter asked him not to, went ahead and signed contracts to buy the three pieces of property on the west side. It is not the first time Mayor Baines has gone behind the Aldermen's backs and pulled such moves, but this one goes even lower than I believed even you could go Mayor Baines. What gives you the right to act like a dictator when it comes to spending valuable tax dollars? Why do we even have a Board of Aldermen? If you're not going to pay them the respect of common decency or work with them to get things done. Mayor Baines has contracted the City in purchasing property that a majority of this Board does not want to buy. We all know about that little move you pulled, by hiding the bonding words in an agenda that nobody saw. Nobody wanted to buy that site and you didn't have the ten votes, but everyone now remembers why you pulled that. This moves stinks like nothing I've ever seen in politics. Mayor Baines you still have not learned to work with the Aldermen and you have shown them no respect and still pulling this childish dictatorial maneuvers to the detriment to these elected officials. I hope all of you aldermen here tonight will stand up and fight for the site you really believe is the right site. And that is the site on East Side, at a cost that is more reasonable and at a location that makes more sense than the congested West Side location. Thank you very much.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk